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TS #102548-a

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

1 November 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Allan Evans, (OIR)
Colonel H. J. Lenley, Jr., USA (ACSI)
Captain W. S. Howell, USN (ONI)
Colonel W. B. Sawyer, USAF (AFOIN 2B2)
Colonel C. H. Dayhuff, Jr., USA (JIG)

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference: NIE 11-3-57: Probable Intelligence Warning
of Soviet Attack on the
Continental US and US and
Allied Forces and Installa-
tions Overseas, through
mid-1960.

1. The attached terms of reference were approved by the Board
of National Estimates on 31 October 1956.

2. Please have your representative meet with us at 10:00 A.M.
on Thursday, 8 November 1956, to discuss these terms of reference.

R. J. Smith

R. J. SMITH
Acting Deputy Assistant
Director
National Estimates

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C E N T R A L I N T E L L I G E N C E A G E N C Y

1 November 1956

SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE 11-3-57: PROBABLE INTELLIGENCE WARNING
OF SOVIET ATTACK ON THE
CONTINENTAL US AND US AND
ALLIED FORCES AND INSTALLA-
TIONS OVERSEAS, THROUGH
MID-1960

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the probable degree of advance warning that could be provided by intelligence in the event of Soviet attack on the continental US and US and Allied forces and installations overseas, through mid-1960.*

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The last estimate on this subject, NIE 11-6-55, was published on 1 July 1955. NIE 11-2-57 is scheduled for completion in February 1957.

2. The critical importance of advance intelligence warning of Soviet attack on the US is stressed in NSC policy papers and is reflected

* Since a Soviet attack on the US would be tantamount to general war, this estimate must in practice deal with the over-all warning which the US might expect to receive of Soviet initiation of general war. Advance warning includes warning of the increased likelihood of war, warning of increased military readiness to attack, warning of clear intent to attack, and warning of clear intent to attack at or about a particular time.

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in the fact that provision of such warning is the highest priority mission of the US intelligence community. Therefore, national estimates on this subject are among the most significant undertaken by the IAC agencies and should be regarded as justifying a full scale research, analysis, and estimative effort. As approved by the IAC in the Post-Mortem to NIE 11-6-55 (IAC D-57/14) there should be employed, in addition to the regular resources of the IAC agencies, full technical support and assistance from the Watch Committee and NSA.

3. While an NIE on advance warning is of broad general use within the US Government, it also meets a specific requirement of the Net Evaluation Subcommittee. Since the new estimate is intended to be used by the NESC as a companion piece to the forthcoming NIE 11-7-56, Soviet Gross Capabilities through Mid-1960, its terminal date should also be mid-1960. In this estimate, however, we intend to consider a wider scope of warning than that required by the NESC, in that our examination will include warning of attacks on US and Allied forces and installations overseas as well as on the continental US itself.

4. This estimate involves the assessment of present US and Allied intelligence capabilities to detect, analyse, and evaluate indications of enemy attack, as well as the factors likely to affect these

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capabilities during the period of the estimate. To be most useful the warning NIE should assess primarily the likelihood of warning of the most probable forms of enemy attack, as outlined in NIE 11-4-56 and in pertinent intelligence annexes to military plans.

5. In view of the above, the agencies are requested to: (a) prepare contributions to update NIE 11-6-55, giving paragraph reference where appropriate; (b) to answer the specific additional questions outlined below; and (c) to provide any further pertinent materials which in their view would be of value. All sources should be used in preparing contributions. In particular:

- (1) Appropriate agencies should seek contributions from pertinent overseas commands (FECOM, EUCCOM, USAFE, etc).
- (2) A special effort should be made by appropriate agencies to assess the potential contribution of aerial reconnaissance, ELINT, and other technical surveillance methods.
- (3) NSA should provide a contribution in its field and participate in working level coordination meetings.
- (4) The NIC should evaluate current and projected warning capabilities and participate in working level meetings.
- (5) Consideration should be given to Allied contributions to US intelligence warning capabilities.

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QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. THE NATURE OF WARNING

- A. Re-examine the possible kinds of advance warning, and estimate their current validity. Will present judgments regarding the likelihood of these kinds of warning continue to be valid through mid-1960?
- B. What broad trends have appeared since publication of NIE 11-6-55, bearing on the nature and degree of advance warning likely to be received? In particular, what has been the effect of any changes in : (1) Soviet military capabilities for attack, including Soviet military equipment, facilities, level of military readiness, etc.; (2) the alternative methods of attack available to the USSR; (3) US and Allied capabilities to collect, identify and transmit indications intelligence; (4) US and Allied intelligence alertness to critical indications?

II. WARNING FROM SOVIET BEHAVIOR

- A. Review and suggest desired changes in Section I, NIE 11-6-55 (paragraphs 13-19).

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- B. Under what circumstances would there be high likelihood of a period of tension preceding a Soviet attack? Under what circumstances would such a period of tension be unlikely? (paragraph 14)
- C. Reassess the reliability of political and military indicators during a period of tension, and specify the factors influencing their reliability. If possible, differentiate between the likelihood and type of warning that could be provided by political and by military indicators during a period of tension. Is it possible that, during such a period, Soviet efforts to attain maximum military readiness would be interpreted by US intelligence as indicating a Soviet decision to attack even though no such decision had been reached? (paragraphs 15-18)
- D. Estimate US and Allied intelligence capabilities to detect Soviet preparation to attack in the event that the USSR attempted a deceptive amelioration of tensions prior to its attack (paragraphs 17 and 18).

III. ALTERNATIVE SCALES OF SOVIET ATTACK (paragraph 20)

Consider the following list of alternative scales of initial Soviet attack, which includes the alternatives set forth in NIE 11-4-56

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(paragraphs 131-136 and 160) and directs primary attention to elements of the alternative estimated as most likely:

- a. Initial surprise nuclear air and missile attack against the continental US and US and Allied forces and installations overseas
 - (1) surprise maximized
 - (2) scale of attack maximized
- b. Same as (a) above, plus surprise attack by other forces employing nuclear and conventional weapons
- c. Full-scale attack (employing nuclear and conventional weapons) against the continental US and US and Allied forces and installations overseas, following a period of mobilization
- d. Attack against US and Allied forces and installations overseas, employing only conventional weapons.

IV. WARNING OF ALTERNATIVE SCALES OF SOVIET ATTACK

- A. Review and suggest desired changes in Sections III to VI, NIE 11-6-55 (paragraphs 21-45). Review particularly the type of preparation the USSR would probably make prior to each of the scales of attack set forth in III. above. Re-estimate

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the "D-minus" warning times given in these sections of NIE 11-6-55, and where feasible, distinguish between the time when a particular type of preparation would need to be started by the USSR and the time when it would become known to US intelligence. Have circumstances altered the validity of the "D-minus time" method of presentation?

- D. Attack on the continental US and US and Allied forces and installations overseas. This examination should reflect the conclusions of NIE 11-7-56 (Gross Capabilities), when available. What effect will increased numbers of heavy bombers capable of operating from interior bases, and the development of an extensive inflight refueling capability, have on Soviet utilization of peripheral staging bases, and hence, on the warning likely to be obtained (paragraphs 35-40)? What effect on the likelihood of warning would result from Soviet employment of submarines in initial attacks, including the employment of nuclear-powered submarines and submarines equipped to launch guided missiles? From the viewpoint of warning, what if any are the limitations on such employment? (paragraph 30)

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During the period, will the state of readiness of Soviet long-range aviation (e.g. level of training, routine flights to staging bases, frequent attack profile flights) reach the point at which air attacks could be launched without a period of intensified preparatory training activity (paragraphs 35 and 36)? To what degree will increased Soviet capabilities to employ guided missiles affect the likelihood of warning (paragraph 41)?

- C. Major land campaigns. What effect on the likelihood of warning will result from the continued modernization of Soviet Army ground units during the period, the adoption of tactical doctrine to fit them for nuclear warfare, and their probable equipment with some types of guided missiles and atomic weapons (paragraph 29)? What effect on the likelihood of warning would result from a Soviet decision to initiate major land campaigns without the use of nuclear weapons?
- D. Full-scale attack. What effect will estimated trends in the USSR (e.g. modernization of forces, military manpower reductions, current economic plans) have on the time necessary

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to prepare for full-scale attack (paragraph 23)? Is there likely to be a point in the advanced stages of military readiness which would represent a virtual Soviet commitment to attack, even though the Soviet leaders had not yet reached a final decision to attack? What would be the indicators of such a situation, and the probable warning time factors?

V. WARNING FROM SOVIET PREPARATION TO RECEIVE RETALIATORY ATTACKS

Review and suggest desired changes in Section VII, NIE 11-6-55 (paragraph 46).

VI. DEVELOPMENT OF US WARNING TECHNIQUES AND PROCEDURES

A. What improvements in US and Allied warning intelligence resources are expected to have a significant bearing on the likelihood of warning by mid-1960? What improvements are expected in:

- (1) ELINT?
- (2) Aerial reconnaissance?
- (3) Covert collection?
- (4) Other collection methods?

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- B. What is the estimated likelihood of warning from these techniques under conditions of: (1) normal peacetime intelligence collection procedures, and (2) emergency procedures?
- C. What improvements are expected in US and Allied intelligence approaches to the warning problem, particularly in methods of selecting, analyzing, and interpreting indications intelligence? What will be the effect of such improvements on the likelihood of warning during the period of this estimate?

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